

Concordia Council on First Nations Education

June 1993 - May 1994

Final Report

**Submitted by Daniel Paul Bork, Coordinator
June 17, 1994**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Native Student Centre was established by the Concordia Council on First Nations Education (CCFNE) and began its operations in September 1992. A September 1992 to May 1993 report of activities was submitted to CCFNE in December 1993. This report examines the operations of CCFNE from June 1993 until May 1994.

2.0 OPERATIONS 1993 -1994

The activities of Summer 1993 were concentrated on reprinting of the Native Student Handbook, development of a Curriculum brochure and a Documentation Centre and the development of a short documentary film proposal for a Native half-way house in Montreal.

3.0 EMPLOYEES

During the 1992 - 93 academic year, the position of Native Student Advisor functioned with a lack of clear definition of the role and responsibilities to be assumed by the advisor within the Native Student Centre. This problem was addressed during the summer of 1993 and resulted in a detailed job description drafted by one Steering Group member and the Coordinator. The line reporting of this position was adjusted so that the Advisor reported directly to the Director, Advocacy and Support Services, Concordia University. This decision was taken because of the prominence of the Counselling function that had been undertaken by the Advisor.

Due to the increasing workload of the Native Student Centre, a Secretary/Receptionist was hired in April, 1993. During the months of September and October, the Secretary was absent (sick leave). A number of student volunteers offered their assistance. Also, a telephone receptionist was hired on a temporary basis to answer telephones and greet new students.

The position of Coordinator assumed full-time status on June 1, 1993. The role and responsibilities of this position were linked to the Steering Group of CCFNE and implementation of their decisions. This role coordinated initiatives in First Nations Education at Concordia University via CCFNE and the Native Student Centre.

An independent assessment of CCFNE structures and operations of 1992 - 1993 and Fall 1993 was undertaken during December 1993 and January 1994, and was completed in February 1994. The assessment recommended changes in line authority, the Steering Group, and the division of roles and responsibilities between CCFNE and First Nations - Concordia. In addition, the position of Native Student Advisor was reviewed. The assessment was conducted by a professional consultant in organizational behavior and

involved extensive consultation of staff, academic advisors, and students directly involved with the Centre. In light of the assessment, several positive changes have occurred.

In respect to line authority, the position of Coordinator (who reported to the Steering Group) was replaced on June 1, 1994 by a Director, drawn from the academic community, who will report directly to the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science. The Steering Group was dissolved as of May 31, 1994.

The review of the position of Native Student Advisor concluded that this position must focus on academic advising, similar to department advising, and that the counselling component should be discontinued. Individual requests for counselling are to be referred to existing services, such as Kahnawake Social Services, Montreal Native Friendship Centre, or if deemed appropriate, to professional counsellors present within the Department of Counselling and Development of the university, who should receive training in Native counselling. The hiring of a Native counsellor within this Department should be encouraged.

4.0 SERVICES

The principal priority of 1993 - 1994 was the consolidation of the services and activities of the Native Student Centre. This priority included the development of the Native Student Advisor position; the training of Secretary/Receptionist; the provision of tutors for students; the acquisition of computers and training; the development of the Documentation Centre and the reference library; the offering of relevant workshops; academic lecturers; and the installation of kitchen facilities.

4.1 Counselling/Advising Service

The final report for the position of Native Student Advisor in the area of Counselling and Advising is as follows:

| 1993 | Counselling | Advising |
|-------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| June | 42.5 | 4 |
| July | 33 | 7 |
| August | 28 | 11 |
| September | 39 | 18.5 |

| | | |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| October | 35.5 | 15.5 |
| November | 22 | 9 |
| December | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 200 | 65 |
| 1994 | Counselling | Advising |
| January | 33 | 21 |
| February | 37 | 25 |
| March | 28 | 16 |
| April | 12 | 9 |
| Total | 110 | 71 |

4.2 Computing Services

The training of the Secretary/Receptionist concentrated upon the utilization of an IBM PS/1 486 Personal Computer with the numerous programs installed for the use of the Native Student Centre. This training included Microsoft Works word processor, financial spreadsheet and Winfax. Training will continue into 1994 -1995 to include new computer programs in management, word processing and accounting.

The Native Student Centre was outfitted with three MacIntosh computers and printers and one IBM computer and printer for student use. This was accompanied by a part-time tutor for the Microsoft Word program during the first six weeks of the Fall semester.

4.3 Tutorial Services

The tutorial service for students was made operational through the request, search, and matching of student and tutor in the areas of English, French, writing skills, chemistry, political science, history, applied social science and mathematics.

4.4 Academic Research Services

The development of the Documentation Centre was positively received by the student body of Concordia, both Native and non-Native. This Centre has subscribed to twenty-four different Native publications which cover First Nations communities. In addition, a reference library, composed of a small collection of books addressing First Nations issues (not available in Webster Library), was created in the Native Student Centre. These books are made available for consultation on site to the Concordia student body.

4.5 Educational Services

During the Fall semester, a number of small workshops were offered to the Native student body covering MacIntosh Computer use, Study Skills with follow-up and the process of creating Native curriculum. These workshops initiated by CCFNE; presentations by outside agencies to Natives students; Native secondary and Cegep student visits; Ojibway language classes and Mohawk language classes have constituted the overall educational activities of the Native Student Centre.

4.6 Miscellaneous Services

The implementation of kitchen facilities was completed in the fall of 1993 and the NSC kitchen is now available for student and staff use.

5.0 PROGRAMMES 1993 - 94

Programming continued to build upon initiatives of CCFNE during 1992 - 93. The activities that occurred during the 1993 - 94 reporting period included a broad range of student-centered projects and events that contributed positively to the educational experience of Native students studying at Concordia and to the sensitization of the University community as a whole. While all of the initiatives listed below were conducted under the auspices of the CCFNE, most involved the participation of Native students under the direction of CCFNE staff with the support of Steering Group members.

5.1 Projects

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Native Student Orientation | September 1993 |
| Native Student Handbook | September 1993 |
| Curriculum Pamphlet | September 1993 |
| Bookmark | September 1993 |
| Native Awareness Days | October 1993 |

5.2 Workshops

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| English Skill Building - NSC | September 1993 |
| Study Skills | November 1993 |
| Studying at the Graduate Level | February 1994 |

5.3 CCFNE Lecture Series

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Dr. Beatrice Medicine <i>Native Women and the Development of Native Society</i> Womens Studies, Ojibway, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples | Fall 1993 |
| Dr. Clare Brant <i>Cultural Factors in Mental Illness and Native Cultural Identity</i> Psychiatrist, Mohawk, University of Western Ontario | Winter 1994 |
| Paul Bourgeois <i>Aboriginal Culture and Tradition in Post-Secondary Education</i> Cultural Advisor, Ojibway, Trent University | Winter 1994 |

5.4 Cultural Programs

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Elder Visit | February 1994 |
| Traditional Teachings Retreat | October 1993 |
| Native Theater Presentation <i>The All Aboriginal Extravaganza</i> , Drew Hayden Taylor | March 1994 |

5.5 Native Student Ambassador Program - Fall & Winter

(In conjunction With Concordia's Liaison Department)

- One week visit to New York State recruitment fairs
- One week recruitment to Maritime provinces with specific visits to Native High Schools
- Kahnawake
- Maniwaki
- Heritage College (2 visits)
- Akwesasne
- Secondary and Cegep Native student visits to NSC (Cree, Mohawk and individuals)

5.6 CCFNE Speaking Engagements

International Students - Concordia
Dawson College
Native Awareness Week - Concordia
Simone de Beauvoir Institute
John Abbott College
Kahnawake Survival School
Kahnawake Education Centre
Summer Institute for Management and Community Development
Conseil en éducation des premières nations - Wendake
Droit de parole - Radio Québec
Chair, Etudes ethniques, Concordia - UQAM

6.0 RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The research and development associated with the Native Student Centre of Concordia University in 1993 - 94 began in June with the financial support of Challenge '93 and the Canadian Native Arts Foundation.

Laverne Gervais, Native Student Advisor, and Daniel Paul Bork, Coordinator, CCFNE, participated during the year in several community development initiatives addressing training and education issues.

The results of the research/analysis undertaken in the summer of 1993 produced a Native Curriculum brochure for 1993 - 1994; research and acquisitions for the Documentation Centre; and a final curriculum report. The Native curriculum brochure was made available to the public in September. The research and acquisitions for the Documentation Centre and reference library have been completed and are available to the student body of Concordia University. The final curriculum report was submitted to Steering Group in September 1993.

The employment of a Project Development Coordinator in the summer of 1993 produced a Native Student Handbook, subsequently recommended by Steering Group as the format to follow in the future. This individual also managed the organization and successful

delivery of the Native Student Orientation, a new printing of the Native student bookmaker, and the initial planning of Native Awareness Days.

The employment of a Native film student resulted in \$12,000 dollars being raised towards the production of a small documentary film on a Native half-way house. The Aboriginal Film Studio, National Film Board of Canada has accepted to develop this film project in their Development Program. This project should be completed by Fall 1994.

An important initiative of CCFNE began in March 1994. Research and development monies were granted to coordinate and improve programs addressing training and professional development. The new *Concordia Institute for Native Training and Development (CINTAD)* is to respond to the needs of aboriginal organizations in Québec and throughout Canada and to manage the development and implementation of education and training resources in human resource and economic development. CCFNE is committed to fostering development of this initiative through consultation and advice, but CINTAD remains financially autonomous.

Research and community development activities with which CCFNE has been involved during the reporting period include the following:

6.1 URBAN NATIVE AIDS PROJECT

The Urban Native Aids Projects sponsored by the Native Women's Shelter and the Montreal Native Friendship Centre was chaired from July 1993 to December 1993 by Ms. Laverne Gervais. The mandate of this project was to identify the content and objectives of a Urban Native AIDS project, to develop a plan of action for its development and to solicit all possible funding sources. Concordia's work in the area of HIV/AIDS has provided valuable resources, including Ms. Gervais' involvement to this project, the Urban Native AIDS Project sponsored by the Native Women's Association. Fund raising for this project took place at Concordia on World Aid's Day.

6.2 CHILD CARE TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Child Care Training Program sponsored by Quebec Native Women's Association was given the mandate to set up a Native Childcare Training and Education Program according to community values and cultural norms with recognized provincial certification. Ms. Gervais participated on the evaluation team (representing Montreal Urban area and Native students) at three pilot project sites - Mistassini (Cree), Restigouche (Micmac) and Chibougamou (Cree).

6.3 LOCAL ABORIGINAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

During the period of June 1993 - December 1993, Daniel Paul Bork served as the Chair of the Local Aboriginal Management Board. The above organization is responsible for decisions of budgetary allocations in training and education of the Montreal Native population. As a component of the Pathways to Success Program under the Federal Human Resource Development Department, this LAMB organization is composed of representatives of the Montreal Native organizations and associations. Two positions at the Native Student Centre were partially funded under the programs of Stay-in-School and Job Development.

6.4 INSTITUTE FOR NATIVE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

In March 1994, CCFNE applied and was granted \$103,000 in research and development monies from the Local Aboriginal Management Board for a period of one year. These monies were to research and develop training and professional development opportunities for the First Nations labour force situated in or near Montreal with existing Concordia University departments and faculties, as well as, other identified and interested institutions. In April 1994, a Director and Secretary were hired to begin research on existing training programs/institutions and to study how Concordia can respond to the professional development needs of the urban aboriginal population of Montreal and surrounding area. The quasi-independent and separate organization framework for CINTAD is a pilot project (similar to the Native Student Centre), administered under with CCFNE, though not funded by CCFNE, with funds managed through the Treasury Department of Concordia University.

6.5 NATIVE ACCESS TO ENGINEERING

In December 1993, Dr G. Valaskakis and Prof. C. Jetté met with representatives of L'Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec and the Dean and administrators of the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science to explore possible academic initiatives leading to the successful integration of more Aboriginal people into the engineering profession in Québec. A Joint Working Group on Native Access to Engineering was established early in 1994 to develop a strategic plan of action to accomplish this objective. As a pilot project, the Joint Working Group proposes, with the support of the CCFNE and the Canadian Aboriginal Science and Engineering Association (CASEA) to operate a one-week *ENGINEERING EXPLORATION SUMMER DAY CAMP FOR ABORIGINAL STUDENTS* in July 1994 in Montreal. This project is the first step in a longer term strategy that is

designed to recruit and retain Aboriginal students for programmes in science and technology.

7.0 STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Members of First Nations - Concordia were the main clientele group of the Native Student Centre. The number of student visits to the Centre for the 1993 - 94 reporting period were as follows:

Fall/Winter Semester

Note: Due to two months sick leave of the secretary, statistics for the months of September and October are not available.

Student visits to Native Student Centre

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| September | N/A |
| October | N/A |
| November | 209 |
| December | 89 |
| January | 148 |
| February | 115 |
| March | 165 |
| April | 125 |
| May | 32 |

Number of Hours for Student Study Room

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| September | N/A |
| October | N/A |
| November | 102.5 |
| December | 62 |
| January | 25 |
| February | 22 |
| March | 79 |
| April | 155 |
| May | 53 |

Number of Hours for Computers

| | |
|-----------|------|
| September | N/A |
| October | N/A |
| November | 43 |
| December | 33 |
| January | 5 |
| February | 22.5 |
| March | 41 |
| April | 30.5 |
| May | 1.5 |

8.0 PUBLICITY

Publicity in 1993 - 1994 was presented to Concordia University through the *Link*, the *Concordian* and the *Thursday Report*, all regular publications at the University.

The recruitment activities organized in conjunction with the Liaison Department have resulted in participation by the Coordinator in *Real Education for the Real World* recruitment video, visits to the State of New York educational fairs, visits to Native High Schools in the Maritimes, student visits to Ontario and local visits to Secondary Schools and Cegeps. The publicity throughout 1992 - 1993 included an increasing number of Native secondary and Cegep Student visits to Concordia via the Native Student Centre.

In May of 1994, the Concordia University Magazine wrote an excellent article concerning the presence of the Native Student Centre, past and present, within the University which served as a recruitment tool and established a basis for a Native Alumni Association. .

The development of the Native Student Centre of Concordia University resulted in visits by UQAM, McGill and UdM Native students who presently have no access to Native Advisors or Counsellors. In addition, Secondary and CEGEP Native students are contacting the Centre and requesting information and help. The Native Student Advisor was active in promoting services to Native students at Dawson College, John Abbott College and others. A liaison network of intervenors in Native education from the Island of Montreal Universities, CEGEPS and First Nations Education services has been established to address and coordinate a growing demand for assistance and information.

It goes without saying that Concordia University has been recognized as leader in this effort.

9.0 ACADEMIC

A special event which occurred during the Fall of 1993 was the presentation by a group of Native and non-Native students to the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Ms. Tracee Diabo, Geography, and Mr. Larry Watt, Political Science, represented the Native student body of Concordia University. This presentation was researched and presented with the help of Dr. Gerald R. Alfred, Assistant Professor, Political Science.

This was preceded in the same week by a submission from Dr. Patrick Kenniff, Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Concordia University, to the Royal Commission. This submission was researched by Audra Simpson with the assistance of Elizabeth Morey, Director, Special Projects, Office of the Rector.

CCFNE was involved in the proposal of new courses for 1994 - 95.

The Film Studies program submitted a new course proposal, *Film Studies First Nations and Film 217* -. This program anticipates offering the course every three years or so, unless additional resources are made available. The proposal of a Native Literature course was tabled for the English Department's Curriculum Committee consideration. Assistant Professor Gerald R. Alfred is teaching Aboriginal Self-Government through the Political Science Department. Also, Art History is presently developing a course on Native Art History.

The English Department, Faculty of Arts and Science, has offered Mr. Tomson Highway the position of Writer-in-Residence for 1994 - 1995. Mr. Tomson Highway has tentatively accepted.

A researcher was hired for a period of four months during the Winter semester 1994 to work on the recommendations of the Final Curriculum Report for 1993. As a result of this research, a Native Academic Resource database has been produced.

10.0 CONVOCATION

In June 1994, First Nations - Concordia organized their annual "Honorary Dinner and Dance" for graduation. Fifteen (15) Native student graduates from Concordia University were honored. The "Honorary Dinner and Dance" was a success and continues to build support among the Native population for Concordia University Native education initiatives.